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FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4177
INFO RUEAHLA/HOMELAND SECURITY CENTER WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0362
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0104

UNCLAS BUCHAREST 000620

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
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STATE FOR EUR/NCE - BILL SILWORTH;
PRM/A - EMILY MESTETSKY AND WHITNEY REITZ

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PREF](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [SOCI](#) [UZ](#) [RO](#)
SUBJECT: UZBEK REFUGEES: ROMANIAN MFA, LOCAL UNHCR
CONCERNED ABOUT SLOW RESETTLEMENT

REF: A. A) DALTON-REITZ E-MAIL 8/13/05

[B. B\) DALTON-MESTETSKY E-MAIL 8/13/05](#)

[1. \(U\) This is an action message -- see paragraph 5.](#)

[2. \(SBU\) PolChief received a call April 11 from MFA Director General for Global Affairs Stelian Stoian expressing concern about the slow resettlement to third countries of the Uzbek refugees transported in August 2005 to a facility near Timisoara, Romania. Stoian expressed concern that 206 of the initial over 440 refugees remain at the facility and that movement towards their transfer had "slowed down in recent weeks." He noted that the GOR had worked cooperatively with U.S. and UNHCR officials and had already extended the refugee's right to remain in Romania until July 28 but "may not be able to do that again." He added that Romania had been "glad to accept the refugees" but did not want their prolonged stay to become "problematic or unsustainable." PolChief provided reassurances that USG agencies were making every effort to resettle the remaining refugees and that plans had already been made for the transport for a large number of them in coming weeks.](#)

[3. \(SBU\) Separately, UNHCR Resident Representative Veerapong Vongvaratai called PolChief on April 12 and 14 to express similar concerns to those of Stoian. He noted that flights out were planned for a number of the refugees in coming weeks, but the cases of roughly half of those remaining in the camp had not been resolved to the point of clearance for departure. He also lamented that morale had declined significantly at the facility in the past month, as many of the refugees had received calls from family members in Uzbekistan with claims that "the situation is safer now." Vongvaratai underscored that UNHCR believes these family members were being pressured by Uzbek authorities to make these "deceptively positive" assessments in order to undermine international efforts to help the refugees. PolChief provided reassurances that the USG was working to resolve the remaining cases as soon as possible \(refs\).](#)

[4. \(SBU\) Post also spoke to local IOM representatives, who confirmed that 102 refugees are scheduled to depart to the U.S. and another 20 to Canada by May 9. They shared, however, Vongvaratai's concern about the cases that remained to be resolved.](#)

[5. \(SBU\) Action Request: Post appreciates information regarding the status of these asylum cases passed from the Department in reftels. However, we seek close coordination](#)

with relevant U.S. agencies so we can continue to reassure the GOR and UNHCR that the USG is taking every step to complete the processing as expeditiously as possible. We would like to do everything possible to retain the goodwill engendered by this summer 2005 success story.

TAPLIN